



# ATF News

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
New York Field Division

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For Immediate Release  
May 2, 2008

## **ALABAMA GUN BUYERS CHARGED, GUN RING DISMANTLED**

### *GUNS SOLD IN BROOKLYN*

NEW YORK — Special Agent in Charge William G. McMahon, of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), New York Field Division, today announced that an entire illegal gun-running organization has finally been charged in federal court in two states. Federal gun charges against four illegal gun buyers in Alabama have been filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Huntsville, Ala., thereby completing the circle of all those involved.

A federal grand jury in Alabama returned an indictment charging illegal gun trafficking against Jacson Desmond White, 30, and Peggy Lynn Kratz, 27, both of Florence, Ala.; Ginny Sue Brown, 29, of Cherokee, Ala.; and Melinda Ann Bennett, 28, of Russellville, Ala.

The four "straw purchasers" bought at least 21 guns, many of which were transported to New York City. A straw purchaser is an individual who buys guns from a federally licensed gun dealer and then turns them over to another person.

According to the indictment, the defendants illegally purchased approximately 21 firearms from federally licensed firearms dealers in Lauderdale and Colbert County for other individuals who then transported the firearms to New York. The nine-count indictment also charges that between December 2006 and April 2007, the defendants conspired to make false statements in connection with the acquisition of firearms from a federally licensed firearms dealer. The four defendants will be issued notices of appearances and are expected to surrender to the U.S. Marshals Service in Alabama.

The investigation began in January 2007 when ATF agents in New York developed information that James Brady, a 31-year-old resident of Alabama and former Brooklyn resident, was selling handguns in Brooklyn. Introduction of an undercover source was made, and over several months a total of 15 handguns were purchased from

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Brady and other members of the trafficking ring. As a result of these undercover gun buys, four subjects were in custody within eight months. In April 2007 Brady, along with his wife Amy Clemons, 25, were arrested in Brooklyn. In June, Jorge Gonzalez, 23, of Brooklyn, was arrested and in September; 28-year-old Jose Hernandez, also of Brooklyn, was in custody.

On Jan. 25, 2008, Gonzalez pleaded guilty in Brooklyn Federal Court to receipt of firearms purchased outside of New York. On Feb. 21, 2008, both Brady and Clemons pleaded guilty to selling guns without a federal license, and, on April 16, 2008, Hernandez pleaded guilty to trafficking both firearms and narcotics. All four are awaiting sentencing.

“With the indictments of the four straw purchasers in Alabama, we have been able to charge the entire gun trafficking organization from straws to traffickers to sellers,” said McMahon. “These individuals were responsible for buying at least 60 firearms destined for the streets, and I am proud of the work that our agents and prosecutors put forth to bring this group down.”

McMahon would also like to thank U.S. Attorney Alice H. Martin, for the Northern District of Alabama, and Special Agent in Charge James M. Cavanaugh, of the ATF Nashville Field Division, for their offices’ participation in this investigation. The Brooklyn case is being prosecuted by the office of U.S. Attorney Benton Campbell, for the Eastern District of New York. All of the defendants face up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 if convicted.

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